Action Against Foreign and Domestic Channels for Exhibiting Obscenity

*112. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether government propose to take suitable action in regard to domestic and foreign channels following pulling up of the employees of a foreign channel for exhibiting obscenity in public in a programme;

(b) whether Government have prescribed any norms and machinery to check foreign channels, in particular, and other domestic channels in general; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (c) It has been informed by the Mumbai Police that they have registered a case against the members of a production team of V-Channel under the relevant provisions of Indian Penal Code, Indecent Representation of Women Act and Bombay Police Act for vulgarity, obscenity and indecent representation of women. Relevant law of the land will take its own course in all such cases and local law enforcing agencies would act accordingly.

As far as prescription of norms for foreign as well as domestic channels and the machinery for their enforcement are concerned, these are governed by the provisions of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and rules made thereunder. As per Section 5 and 6 of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, no cable operator shall transmit or retransmit any programme or advertisement on his cable service unless these are in conformity with the prescribed codes. However, free to air programmes of foreign satellite channels are exempted from this provision. Enforcement of these provisions are to be done by the authorised officers to be notified by the respective State Governments. Some of the State Governments have not notified authorised officers for purposes of all the sections of the Act. Government proposes to introduce a Cable TV Networks (Regulation) Amendment Bill in the current session of Paliament with a view to remove, amongst others, these lacuna.

Further, the TV channels uplinking their programmes from India are bound, through appropriate licensing conditions, to abide by the programme and

advertisement codes as applicable to Doordarshan. However, the Government is not in a position to impose such conditions or obligations on the TV channels uplinking their programmes from outside the country, as they are not bounded to seek permission or approval for downlinking. This situation has got further accentuated as these channels were earlier not permitted to uplink their programmes from India. In order to remove this anomaly, the Government has liberalized its uplinking policy recently enabling these channels to uplink their programmes from India, so as to bring them within the ambit of our rules and regulations particularly, the ones relating to the compliance with our porgramme and advertisement codes.

Kickbacks in Awarding Telecasting Rights of Cricket Matches

*113. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that like cricket match-fixing, lot of money has changed hands in awarding telecasting rights by Doordarshan of various Cricket Series including World Cup;

(b) if so, who are involved in this scam:

(c) what steps are being taken to bring the culprits to book; and

(d) whether Government are going to order CBI enquiry into this episode and if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) No Sir. Prasar Bharati has intimated that Doordarshan did not award telecasting right to any other party.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Payment of Salaries to Employees of RIC and Cycle Corporation ETC.

*114. SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDEY: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the status of payment of monthly salaries to the employees of RIC, Cycle Corporation and Refractory Works of Burn Standard and Jessop; and

(b) the likely date of payment of unpaid salaries?